



State Representative Richard O. Belden

Dear Friends,

As 2005 draws to a close, it is time to look back on what we accomplished. The political landscape was marked by change - a new Governor and Senate and House Leadership. Landmark events like the state's first execution in 45 years made headlines. Civil unions and taxpayer financed political campaigns- both of which I opposed, sparked debate.

Working without regard to partisan politics and following the lead of Gov. Rell, we made long-term commitments to ease transportation problems that we confront daily, particularly in Fairfield County. This \$1.3 billion initiative will add hundreds of commuter rail cars over time, expand ferry service in Long Island Sound, enhance commercial barge routes and improvements to the I-95 and I-84 corridors.

After seven years of debate, the legislature banned hand-held cell phones in order to make our roads safer. We also restricted driving practices for our young drivers to make them safer. As House Republicans, we voted to protect the state's constitutional spending cap from further erosion.

I co-sponsored legislation that commits \$6.5 million annually for farmland preservation and co-sponsored legislation that will permit the downtown parcel known as the "Slab" to remain as open space

Despite all these advancements unfinished business always remains to be addressed in the nest session beginning in February. Protecting taxpayers' pocketbooks and fixing the broken formula that distributes state education funding disproportionately will be at the top of my agenda.

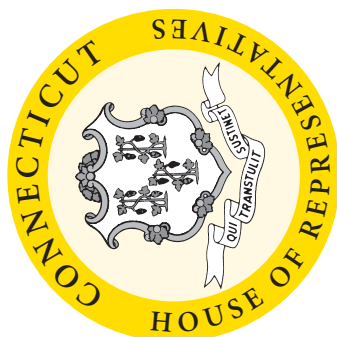
As always, I look forward to assisting with any state related or consumer issues that you may have. Thank you for the honor and privilege of representing the 113th District in our state legislature in Hartford.

Happy Holidays and New Year



Representative Belden debates on the floor of the House during the 2005 legislative Session.

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State Representative
RICHARD O. BELDEN
For Thirty-One Years Proudly
Serving the 113th District
Shelton ★ Connecticut



Representative Richard O. Belden
Room 4200, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

TELEPHONE:

Hartford Office : (800) 842-1423
Home : 924-1757

E-MAIL:

richard.belden@houseop.state.ct.us

Member:

Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee
Labor and Public Employees Committee
Legislative Management Committee
State Bond Commission

Please visit our website www.houseop.state.ct.us

2005 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



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Rep. Belden and Governor M. Jodi Rell discuss legislation during the 2005 Legislative Session.

PROTECTING YOUR INTERESTS

Voting for Fiscal Responsibility

During the 2005 session, I and many of my colleagues spoke out for the average family. We know how hard people work, especially in a high tax state like Connecticut. Residents here pay the highest federal, state and local taxes per person. We have the largest per capita state debt, and a huge unfunded liability for teachers' and state employee pensions.

Honoring the Spending Cap

We voted against efforts by special interest groups and the majority party Democrats to increase spending and taxes faster than people's incomes. We voted to honor the constitutional spending cap, which was approved in 1992 by an overwhelming 80 percent of statewide voters.

Protecting Jobs

Connecticut lags behind the rest of the nation in job creation, income growth, and economic expansion. Now is not the time to impose job-killing tax increases and more regulation on employers. We opposed excessive spending increases and new regulations.

Protecting Property Rights

We voted to support Connecticut property owners in the wake of a recent Supreme Court decision allowing the City of New London to seize residents' homes to make way for an economic development project. We voted to limit government's ability to take property through eminent domain.

Fighting for Fair School Funding

I will continue to fight for a more equitable distribution of state education aid to our towns to enhance the quality of education in our public schools. Under the current school aid formula the state sends \$9,000 per pupil to students in the cities, while suburban communities receive as little as \$100 per student.

Ethics Reform

For a third year, the General Assembly approved legislation to further tighten the state's ethics requirements. We also abolished the State Ethics Commission and replaced it with a Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board and Office of State Ethics.

Campaign Finance

A number of loopholes in the campaign finance bill still allows special interest money into the process, and allows party and leadership PACs disproportionate power. Therefore, I opposed the measure.

Reforming the Legislature

We proposed negotiating the state budget in the open instead of behind closed doors, giving 72-hour public notice before voting on any new law, and requiring a public hearing on any tax increase.

Farmland Preservation

We approved new legislation that will help preserve and protect Connecticut's dwindling farm land and open space by allowing the agriculture commissioner to enter into joint ownership agreements with certain nonprofit organizations to acquire the development rights to qualified agricultural land.

2005 LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Bills Introduced | 3769 |
| Laws Passed | 304 |
| Public Acts Passed | 295 |

Bi-state Long Island Sound Protection

We approved a new law providing for the creation of a New York - Connecticut Committee to help protect Long Island Sound. The committee would recommend legislation to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impact of proposed industrial or other uses of the Sound's public trust resources.

Nursing Home Fire Safety

To ensure the safety of nursing home residents, we extended the deadline for nursing homes to install fire extinguishing systems from July 1, 2005 to July 31, 2007, and required them to be installed throughout the nursing home.

Coverage for Breast Cancer Screening

We required health insurers to offer both mammography and magnetic resonance imaging as options for breast cancer screening for women with family histories of breast cancer.

Consumer Protection

The House and Senate adopted legislation to help protect consumers from becoming victims of identity theft and bank fraud. We also enacted a law, that I first proposed a year earlier, to prohibit the sale of gift certificates with expiration dates so that people who receive gift cards can redeem them for merchandise they really want at a time of their own choosing.

Gambling Revenues

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Lottery: | \$280,736,074 |
| PariMutuel: | \$152,510 |
| OTB: | \$5,783,041 |
| Charitable Games: | \$1,398,295 |
| Casinos: | \$402,733,980 |
| Total: | \$690,830,900 |

Goes to General Fund for Various Programs

Paramedic Recertification

We passed legislation allowing paramedics whose licenses have lapsed to be recertified on a temporary basis as emergency medical technicians (EMTs) under certain conditions and apply for renewal of their paramedic licenses or for recertification as EMTs before their temporary certificates expire.

Workers Compensation for National Guard Soldiers

We enacted legislation that provides workers compensation benefits to members of the Connecticut National Guard when they are called to active duty.

Corsair Designated State Aircraft

We designated the F4U Corsair as the State Aircraft to honor Vought-Sikorsky, United Aircraft, Pratt and Whitney and Hamilton Standard workers who produced the Corsair, the only major World War II combat aircraft built entirely in a single state.

Restricted Driving

The legislature voted to require 16- and 17-year olds learning to drive under learner's permits to have a minimum of twenty instead of eight hours of behind-the-wheel instruction before they qualify for drivers' licenses. It also prohibits 16- or 17-year old licensed drivers from driving from 12: 00 a. m. through 5: 00 a. m. unless they are traveling because of employment, school or religious activities, or medical necessity.

ID Requirement for Motor Vehicle Registration

We authorized the Department of Motor Vehicles to require anyone who tries to register a motor vehicle to provide satisfactory personal identification and, if they are Connecticut residents, to obtain Connecticut driver's licenses or non-driver photo identification cards.

Local Bonding Projects

With the help of Gov. Rell and the support of the entire legislative delegation, I was instrumental in securing much needed state funds for a variety of local projects. These included:

- \$1 million to convert the Pine/Willis School into the Shelton Boys & Girls Club annex for youth in Ansonia.
- A \$4.2 million grant and \$15.5 million low-interest loan to upgrade and extend our Water Pollution Control facility.
- \$33,000 for the acquisition of the Above the Overlook parcel to preserve as open space. Route 110 Designation

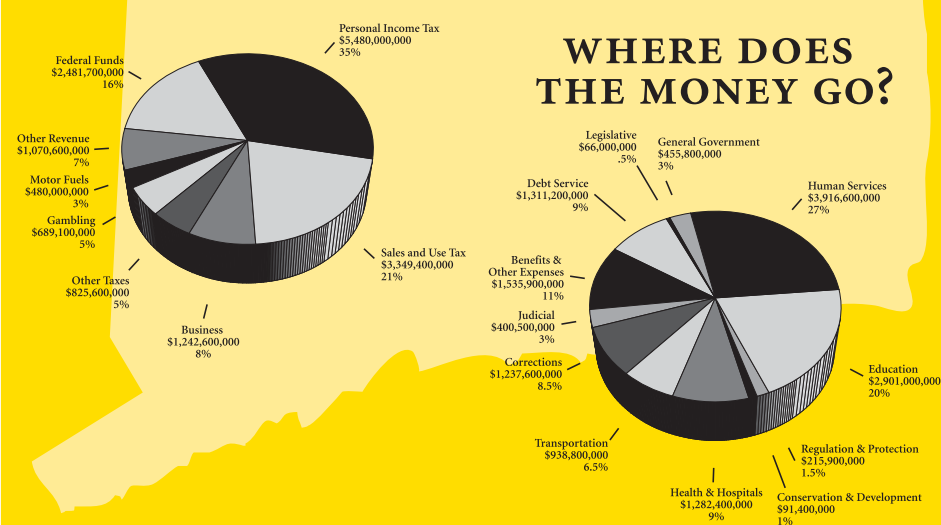
Along with the rest of the legislative delegation I was proud to spearhead the efforts to re-designate a portion of Route 110 as the Veterans Memorial Highway to honor all veterans both living and dead

State Budget

The legislature adopted a \$31-billion two-year budget that raised spending 9 percent the first year and 12 percent over two years. The budget increases taxes on employers and violates the state's constitutional spending cap. I could not support the excessive spending and tax increases this budget mandates.

BUDGET ENDING JUNE 30, 2005 THE 2005 GENERAL FUND AND THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND TOGETHER SPEND \$14.4 BILLION

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?



*Revenues Exceeded Spending Leaving A General Fund Surplus of \$777 Million